

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

St. JAMES AFRICAN UNION METHODIST CHURCH

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

415 Jefferson Ave.

second

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md.

VICINITY OF Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☒ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☒ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Trustees of the AUMP Church

Telephone #: 828-6411

STREET & NUMBER

415 Jefferson ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

VICINITY OF

Baltimore

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #: 125:118

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

D,

DI

SI

CI

BA-1000 - 415 Jefferson - St. James AUMP Church

1881 and 1906

This frame church was first built in 1881 and was raised to two stories in 1906. The pulpit, chancery, and choir loft on the second floor are from the first building.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This church was first built as a one-story building in 1891. In 1906 it was raised to its present 2nd story form. The paneled choir loft and balustraded chancery were moved to the second floor with the sanctuary, and the first floor is now used for informal gatherings and for service facilities.

The church is basically of frame construction on a foundation of local stone. A summer beam in the first floor ceiling is supported by flared cast iron posts. Narrow, beaded vertical boards panel the walls and ceiling on the first floor, and wainscot the second floor. The church's exterior is covered in grey asbestos shingles.

The first floor plan consists of an entry and closet in the northeast corner, a kitchen in the southeast corner the main assembly room with a boxed-in stove flue, and a furnace room and rest rooms to the rear.

An exterior flight of steps rises to the main central doors, which lead to a landing slightly above the first floor level. From here a wide flight of stairs rises to the second floor. The double doors at the head of the stairs are said to be the front doors from the original church. Each door features a glass panel over a small wooden panel with cut-in corners. The door molding is a quirk-ogee with chamfer.

The second floor plan includes the pastor's office in the southeast corner and a small room with a winding stair to the balcony in the northeast corner. The balcony surmounts these rooms. It swells in a curve towards its center, and the simple flush-board vertical paneling along its leading edge follows this line. In the sanctuary, three rows of pews are divided by two aisles. The chancery is backed by a raised pulpit and choir loft. An alcove projects from the center of the rear wall. It features a religious painting. The four windows along the north and south sides rise in Gothic arches with stained glass in the upper sections. Steel tie rods connecting the walls hold the church roof in tension.

The main, or east, facade of the St. James AUMP church presents a well-planned composition. To the south, a gothic-arched window lights each floor. There is an identical window on the north the second floor. Beneath this window an awning sheltered door leads to the first floor. This door is painted red, with four black horizontal panels. The central double doors each contain six black panels surrounded by red rails and stiles. A four-pane transom tops the door. Resting directly on this framework are two windows surmounted by a wide stained glass-gothic arch. (continued)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1861 a small group of devout Christians organized a religious society and held meetings from house to house. The first meeting was held in the home of the late James Garrett. The house yet stands near the Mount Calvary AME church. It was given to Mr. Garrett by the Pleasant family. It was the home of the late Frank Johnson and Ida Scovens Johnson. Mrs. Maria Pratt, mother of the founder of Mount Olive Baptist church (Rev. James H. Williams), supplied the oil that gave the first light for the meetings. They worshipped in this house for years, and in October 1881, Mr. Ben Johnson and others realized the need of a church building. They purchased the present property on Jefferson Avenue from Henry Bowen. The pastor was the late Rev. James Manly, and the trustees were: Mr. Ben Johnson, Sam Preston, Alexander Frazier, Alexander Williams, and James Garrett. Saint James was the first Negro Methodist church in Towson, and was deeded to the AUMP Conference on October 17, 1881.²

The church was fully developed down through the years. The doors have been ever opened to the distressed and those oppressed by the cares of life. Spiritual life in this church has been rich, and it has been pastored by some of the most able men. Rev. J.A. Manly was the first, followed by Rev. Charles A. Williams, who was a descendant of the slave institution. He was freed by the will of General Charles Ridgely, in 1830. Ministers following Charles Williams were Rev. Columbus Sides, Rev. Alfred Hammond, Rev. J. H. Handy, Rev. J. W. Coleman, and Rev. J. H. Medley, who in 1906-7 rebuilt the church and raised it to its present two-story structure. Other ministers were: Rev. S. Mills, Rev. W. Edwards, Rev. G. F. Deshields, Rev. Samuel Jones, Rev. John Manuky, Rev. W. C. Cleaver, Rev. L. S. Stewart, and Rev. E. H. McNair.

The present pastor, Rev. J.A. McManus and his wife were sent to the church by the conference. Rev. McManus has become an active member in community affairs. A newspaper and a nursery school has been started, both spiritual and financial programs organized to deal with two major problems in the East Towson Community.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE _____ COUNTY _____

STATE _____ COUNTY _____

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marcus Pollock/coordinator Merry Stinson, architect 7/77

ORGANIZATION

Committee to Save E. Towson 523-8870

STREET & NUMBER

600 W. Chesapeake Ave.

CITY OR TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

415 Jefferson Description continued

A cast-iron bell with the inscription "Andrew Wenedy, West Troy , N. Y. 1845" cast in the metal once sat in a bell tower in the church's east-west running gable. It now rests on a concrete platform to the south of the church.

Significance:

The Saint James AUMP church is an excellent interpretation of turn of the century styles by Black builders. It shows a sophistication of design and great sensitivity and sense of fashion in the woodwork.

Significance 415 Jefferson Continued

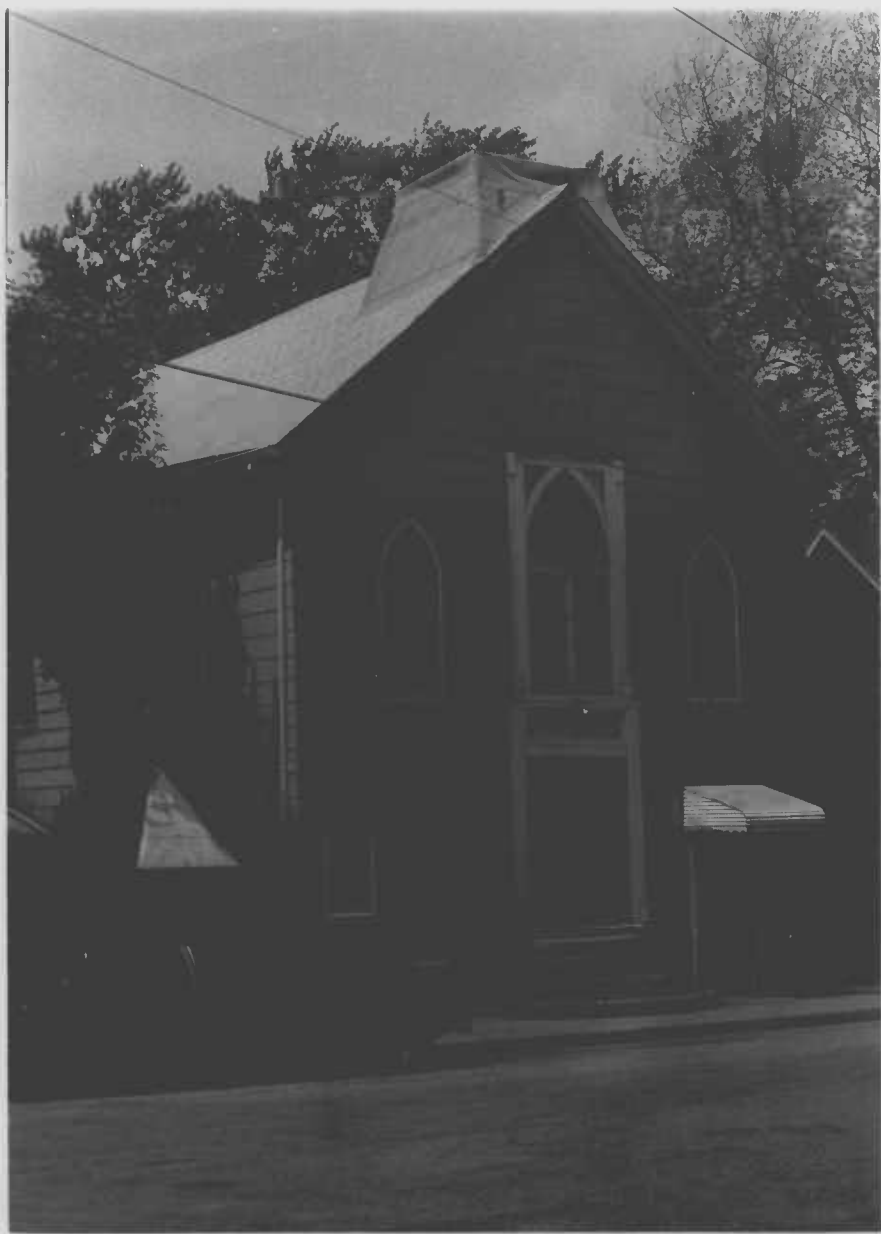
- 1 Saint James Church One Hundredth Year Anniversary Brochure
(1861-1961)
- 2 Baltimore County Office of Land Records
- 3 Ibid., footnote # 1.

East Towson Historical Survey

Major Bibliographical Reference

1. Baltimore County Department of The Department of Land Records.
2. Maps of Baltimore County - 1877 G. M. Hopkins, 1898 Bromley Atlas, 1915 Bromley Atlas. Towson Bicentennial 1768-1968. Bicentennial Committee of Baltimore County, Towson, Maryland. Lanier Press.
3. Baltimore County Tax Maps 1971
Baltimore County Office of Land Records.
4. Census Tract of Baltimore County 1850-1870.
5. Streets of Towson - Paper written by William Halifield.
6. Inventory of Slaves General Charles R. 1790, 1830.
Article entitled Negro Suffrage August 18, 1894.
7. Certificates of Manumission March 1820, 1840
Baltimore City Department of Legislative Reference.
Record of Court Proceedings 1829-1860
8. Anniversary Brochure - St. James African Union Methodist Church.
9. Disbursement Record for materials used to build the Towson
"colored" school - 1868 Freedmans Bureau Baltimore, Maryland
10. Lynching of Howard Cooper - July 1885 - Maryland Journal 1885.
11. Record of Incorporation Baltimore County Relief Association,
Towson, Maryland, 21204 - Baltimore County Office of Land Records.
12. Baltimore County Department of Education.
13. Judicial Record - JB 39-103
" " LMB 146 - 238 P
Baltimore County Courts

RECEIVED
JUL 28 1977
MARYLAND HISTORICAL
TRUST



BA-1000

St. James AUMPC Church

415 Jefferson Ave.

Towson, Md.

east

Merry Stinson

1977